

Message Text

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ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 L-03 H-02 DHA-02 OES-06 PA-02

PRS-01 USIE-00 SSO-00 SCA-01 SMI-01 CEQ-01 EPA-04

INT-05 /041 W

-----142033Z 028336 /44

O 142016Z MAR 77

FM AMCONSUL HALIFAX

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1573

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS HALIFAX 0106

E O 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC EFIS CA

SUBJECT: PROTECTION OF AMERICANS: NEWFOUNDLAND

SEAL HUNT

1. EMBASSY OTTAWA RSO PHONED ME AT NOON MAR 14 TO TELL ME THAT EMB HAS RECEIVED PHONE CALL FROM AMCIT MICHAEL AISNER WHO IS AT ST ANTHONY, NEWFOUNDLAND, AS PART OF THE GROUP OPPOSING ANNUAL SEAL HUNT. AISNER, WHO IS CONNECTED WITH BRIAN DAVIES INTL FUND FOR ANIMAL WELFARE, ALLEGED THAT MOB OF SEALERS WAS HOLDING HIM AND OTHER AMCITS PRISONER IN THEIR HOTEL.

2. I IMMEDIATELY TELEPHONED RCMP DETACHMENT AT ST ANTHONY AND SPOKE WITH OFFICER-IN-CHARGE, INSP MCGUIRE. MC GUIRE DENIED THAT ANY "MOB" PER SE EXISTED. HE CONFIRMED THAT THERE WAS A PICKET LINE OF SEALERS SURROUNDING HELICOPTERS OUT BACK OF HOTEL WHICH WERE CHARTERED BY DAVIES S GROUP AND MEDIA REPS. PICKETERS ARE DENYING ACCESS TO CHOPPERS AND SAY THEY WILL NOT PERMIT THEM TO FLY TOMORROW ON OPENING DAY OF SEAL HUNT. THERE IS NO INTERFERENCE WITH AMCITS AND OTHERS FREELY UNCLASSIFIED

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ENTERING OR LEAVING HOTEL OR TRAVELING AROUND THE TOWN, UNIFORMED RCMP CONSTABLES, MOREOVER, ARE REMAINING IN AND AROUND HOTEL TO KEEP EYE ON DEVELOPMENTS AND ASSURE SAFETY.

3. FROM WHAT INSP MC GUIRE SAID, IT SEEMED TO ME THAT RCMP IS DOING ITS LEVEL EST TO KEEP LID ON A TENSE

SITUATION. THERE WILL BE A PRIVATE MEETING OF THE OPPOSING PARTIES ON AFTERNOON OF MAR 14 AND A PUBLIC MEETING IN EVENING. RCMP WILL PLAY ITS ROLE BY EAR AND WILL FOCUS MORE ON AVOIDING ANY VIOLENCE THAN ON UPHOLDING ANY "RIGHTS" OF AGGRIEVED PARTIES. THERE ARE AT PRESENT MORE THAN TWENTY RCMP OFFICERS IN ST ANTHONY.

4. AFTER TALKING WITH MC GUIRE, I PHONED AISNER AT VIKING HOTEL IN ST ANTHONY. HE REPEATED TO ME WHAT HE HAD TOLD EMBASSY BUT BACKTRACKED SOMEWHAT WHEN I LET HIM KNOW THAT I HAD CONFERRED ALREADY WITH RCMP AND HAD THEIR ASSESSMENT OF SITUATION. HE WAS NEVERTHELESS DETERMINED TO TELL ME AT SOME LENGTH OF HIS FEARS FOR THE SAFETY OF SIXTEEN AMCITS IN HIS GROUP AND HOW SOME EUROPEAN MEDIA REPS HAD ALLEGEDLY BEEN TOLD THEY COULD NOT GO INTO TOWN FROM HOTEL EARLIER IN MORNING. HE WAS ALSO UPSET ABOUT POSSIBLE CLIMATIC DAMAGE TO A COLLEAGUE S PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT LOCKED IN ONE OF THE HELICOPTERS. MOST OF ALL, HE WANTED ME AND EMB OTTAWA TO PUT HEAT ON RCMP IN OTTAWA TO ASSURE ENOUGH MOUNTIES IN ST ANTHONY TO ASSURE SAFE TAKEOFF OF SEAL HUNT PROTESTORS WHEN HUNT OPENS TOMORROW.

5. I TOLD AISNER THAT I HAD HEARD CONSIDERABLE ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS IN ST ANTHONY ON CBC AND THAT I WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE RCMP IN OTTAWA WAS BEING KEPT ABREAST OF THE SITUATION THERE. HE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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HE MUST LOOK TO THE RCMP FOR HIS SAFETY BUT HE WOULD NOT AGREE TO MY REQUEST THAT HE TAKE HIS GUIDANCE FROM THEM TOMORROW. HE WENT INTO LONG MONOLOGUE ON HIS RIGHTS AND BRIAN DAVIES RIGHTS AND REFUSED TO ACCEPT MY SUGGESTION THAT RIGHTS COULD BE ENFORCED SUBSEQUENTLY IN COURT THAT THAT AS A PRACTICAL MATTER HE SHOULD TAKE RCMP GUIDANCE TOMORROW.

6. THROUGHOUT CONVERSATION, AISNER WAS MAKING WILD CHARGES THAT GOC WAS PAYING SEALERS TO OPPOSE THE WILDLIFE GROUPS THAT THAT THE RCMP COULD NOT BE TRUSTED BECAUSE THEY WERE ON THE PAYROLL OF THE GOC. OUT TALK ENDED INCONCLUSIVELY. I GAVE AISNER MY NAME AND TELEPHONE NUMBER AND TOLD HIM I WOULD DO WHAT I COULD TO GET HIS PAL S PHOTO EQUIPMENT IN FROM THE COLD. MADE A FINAL PHONE CALL TO RCMP AT ST ANTHONY WITH REQUEST THAT THEY DO WHAT THEY COULD TO GET ACCESS TO THE HELICOPTER IN QUESTION.

7. FOREGOING MERELY FOR DEPARTMENT S INFORMATION IN
CASE OF QUERIES. NO ACTION REQUESTED. MOORE

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NNN

Message Attributes

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